



The Pharmacy Connection

A forum for pharmacy related news and updates for DMH programs

September 28, 2011

A Message from the Medical Director, Roderick Shaner, M.D.

Those of us who order haloperidol or fluphenazine decanoate in our practices are aware that the supply has been less than reliable over the last few years, and we are currently in the midst of another dry spell. The cause of this drought is not clear, as industry sources vaguely refer to manufacturing problems and safety concerns. We do have some in stock and should not hesitate to use it, if needed. In the event we run out of either of these medications, the options are clear:

1. Switch to oral medications, if possible.
2. Switch to another long-acting injectable (LAI) medication if a more appropriate alternative is not available.

Medication / Typical dosage per month	Fluphenazine Dec 50mg	Haloperidol Dec 100mg	Olanzapine LAI 405mg	Paliperidone Palm 234mg	Risperidone Consta 100mg
Cost per month	\$30	\$38	\$1,114	\$1,632	\$1,088 (Covered by Patient Assistance Program)
Monthly average of indigent clients prescribed LAI	40	190	0	0	30

The other depot medications are risperidone LAI, olanzapine PAI, and paliperidone LAI. Given the high cost of these drugs, we will have to be particularly careful to document the necessity for their use. For example, we might indicate that oral medications would be a less effective option, as non-medication compliance has resulted in adverse consequences for the client.

With our current emphasis on Recovery concepts in mental health use, we must consider the relationship of LAIs to autonomy and self-efficacy. We must be clear that LAIs and autonomy are not necessarily in conflict. At the same time, we must be sensitive to the fact that non-compliance alone, without other resulting problems, is not an automatic indication for LAI use.

To access previous bulletins, go to the DMH Pharmacy webpage: http://dmh.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dmh/clinical_tools/clinical_pharmacy

